

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced a \$10,110 grant has been awarded to the Cutting Garden, located in Youngsville, New York, to install a 6.7KW photovoltaic system that will reduce the small business's environmental impact and energy costs. Hinchey wrote a letter to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency in support of the grant application, which is administered by the USDA's Rural Energy for America Program. Hinchey has supported the program since its creation and this year used his position on the House Appropriations Committee to prevent a Republican effort to eliminate funding for the program.

"This photovoltaic solar system will help Cutting Garden install a photovoltaic system that will reduce energy costs and lessen the business's carbon footprint," said Hinchey. "That's why I wrote a letter to the USDA in support of this grant. Direct investments in alternative energy, like this one, help create jobs, stimulate economic growth, save money over the long run, reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy and upgrade the quality of our environment."

Sullivan County small businesses receive special consideration for USDA grants as they fall within the Sullivan-Wawarsing Rural Enterprise Area Partnership Zone - a USDA designation that Hinchey worked to establish in 1999 to strengthen community development efforts and give the area precedence in receiving federal grants and loans.

Located in Sullivan County, the Cutting Garden serves as a central gathering and selling place for local artisans and carries fair trade accessories for the home and garden as well as vintage collectibles. True to its name, the Cutting Garden allows customers to cut flowers or pick sun-ripened natural grown vegetables.

USDA's Rural Energy for America Program was established by the 2008 farm bill to offers funds for farmers, ranchers and rural small businesses for the purchase and installation of renewable energy systems and energy-efficiency improvements.